



The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

APRIL-MAY 1988

Property of
Graduate Theological Union

SEP 8 1988



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Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I.

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APRIL-MAY 1988

EDITOR

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1-2-288/31 DOMALAGUDA, HYDERABAD-29 (A.P.)

Articles, reports, should be sent to the

Editor by the 5th of every month

HON. BUSINESS MANAGER

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Synod Secretariat

POST BOX No. 4906, CATHEDRAL ROAD, MADRAS-600 086

Phone : 471266

All remittances and communications regarding subscriptions and advertisements to be sent to the Hon. Business Manager

HON. AGENT IN U.K.

REV. I. L. THOMAS

11, CARTERET STREET, LONDON SW1H 9DL

Tel. No. 01-222 4214

HON. AGENT FOR THE U.S.A.

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64 Magnolia Avenue, Jersey City

NEW JERSEY 07306 U.S.A. TEL. 201. 798-2888

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION PER ANNUM

Subscription in India	Rs. 15.00
Single Copy	Rs. 2.00

OVERSEAS SUBSCRIPTION :

	Sea Mail	Air Mail
U.S.A.	\$ 4.00	\$ 9.00
U.K.	£ 2.50	£ 6.00
Australia	\$ 5.00	\$ 10.00
New Zealand	\$ 5.00	\$ 10.00

25 Years Ago!

Village Women's Classes examinations occupy much of the March and April, and in all the Areas and in many sections women will be taking part. Evangelism should be the main theme of Women's fellowship work in the future, according to the decision of the Central Committee. This decision was made in the light of the growth of the Fellowship so far. A letter from the President, the Rev. Wittakar, regarding the decision and with suggestions as to methods, will be sent soon to all branches.

—Churchman 1963

RATES OF ADVERTISEMENT

Full Page	Rs. 300	per insertion
Half Page	Rs. 150	"
Quarter page	Rs. 100	"
Less than Quarter Page	Rs. 50	"

Hony. Business Manager

XII : 1 . . . For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things wherefore thou convinceth little by little them that fall from the right away.'

HOLY SPIRIT

JNDAR CLARKE

ishop-in-Madras

Introduction

More needs to be said and read about the Holy Spirit and much more needs to be experienced. He is our Godhead. He is part of the 'One in three and three in One'. He is the God we worship. He also is the God of the Bible. The Holy Scriptures tell us all about Him from Genesis to Revelations. Thirdly He is the moving spirit in the church. On the day of Pentecost He caused the Christian Church. De Nove and could be understood as the further extension of the Incarnation. He is the continued presence of Jesus Christ and reveals Himself as Man's Eternal Contemporary. So we need to experience the Holy Spirit as a part of the Triune God, the God of the Bible and the Lord of the Church.

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

The spirit existed in the O.T., Gen. 1 : 2-Ruach Adonal-prevailing and the pervading spirit in chaos bringing newness, light in darkness, exemplified in the early O.T. times as the creative energy of God. He is the God of creation. The patriarch, though not explicitly mentioned had the Holy Spirit. The people of Israel and their leaders were in possession of the Spirit of God. The rulers of Israel were strengthened and inspired by the Spirit of God as did things beyond human ability. The Spirit of God empowers human resources to be active supernatural forces. Judges 6 : 34 'But the Spirit of the Lord took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet.' In this way Gideon delivered the Israelites from the Midianites and Amalakites. Judges 14 : 6 'And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Him and He tore the lion asunder as one tears a kid and he had nothing in his hand. The Spirit of God was an inspiring force to the prophets and they prophesied with the power of the Spirit of God. 1 Samuel 10 : 6 'And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them and shalt be turned into another man'. Micah 2 : 8 'But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgement, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.'

Inter-Testamental Period

The conception of the Spirit of God falls into the background in apocryphal and apocalyptic literature. However we have some reference to it in the Jewish-Alexandrian Book of Wisdom 1 : 7 'The Spirit of God hath filled the world.'

The Holy Spirit in the N.T.

Reference to the Holy Spirit is scanty in the synoptic Gospels. They are more frequent in Luke than in Matthew and Mark.

Synoptic Gospels

The birth and boyhood narratives. Matthew 1 : 18, 20 ; Luke 1 : 15, 35.

The Baptism : Mark 1 : 8 ; 10, 12 ; Matthew 3 : 16, 4 : 1 ; Luke 3 : 22, 4 : 1.

Supernatural power descends on Jesus for the world to know that He begins His ministry and to instal and fill Him for the ministry. He is full of the Holy Spirit. Luke 4 : 1. After baptism, He is led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Matthew 4 : 1 ; Mark 1 : 12 ; Luke 4 : 1.

The teachings of Jesus : Jesus believed on the spirit. Luke 4 : 18.

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me', He called it the spirit of God and related its work of power closely to His own.

John's Gospel

The gift of the spirit was given to the disciples after Jesus was glorified-John 7 : 39. The function of the spirit is to carry on the work of Christ John 16 : 7. In the fourth Gospel the Holy Spirit is described as Paraclete-comforter-John 14 : 6.

Wycliff describes it as Comforter or Strengtheners.

Origen calls it as Consoler

McBert & R. V. Margin mentions him as Helper.

A Theologian quotes as a friend in need.

Lofthouse interprets him as Vindicator.

The Holy Spirit is the 4th Gospel and is the agent of the new birth. John 3 : 5 and interprets the Gospel of Jesus Christ anew to each generation, bringing out (inspiring) the Inner and hidden truths.

Pauline Epistles

Paul gives us a theology of the Holy Spirit. For St. Paul the Holy Spirit is the Divine Power that transforms man. The Holy Spirit is the transforming power of God. The Holy Spirit produces the new life in Christ. Paul's treatment of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is practical, experimental and speculative. For Paul the spirit is identified with the living Christ and with fruits that result thereof. Love : 1 Cor. 13. Fruits of the Spirit : Gal. 5 : 22 & 23. For Paul the Holy Spirit comes to man and delivers him from sin, death and the law and opens the way to freedom and fruits of the spirit.

him from sin, death and the law and opens the way to freedom and fruits of the Spirit. Paul expounds the Holy Spirit in his writings as the transforming power and the living and life giving God available to man to enable man to produce results.

THE HOLY SPIRIT TODAY

The Need For Exposition

I think there has been scepticism fear and doubt in many Christians regarding the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has been wrongly identified with some sects or groups and sometimes even with the Pentecostals. To have the Pentecostal experience is one thing and to be a Pentecostalist is something entirely different. Perhaps people have been scared into the speaking of tongues, so much so, that there can be no other understanding of the Holy Spirit other than speaking in tongues. This is thoroughly unscriptural. St. Paul makes it very clear in 1 Cor. 12 that the speaking in tongues is a gift of the Holy Spirit. This needs to be explained to our people and there will be less fear and more openness to the Holy Spirit. The speaking in tongues is a definite expression of the Holy Spirit but certainly not the only expression of the Holy Spirit. There are many, many Christians filled and anointed with the Holy Spirit who do not speak in tongues and there are many Christians filled with the Holy Spirit who speak in tongues. So the speaking in tongues is not the essential prerequisite of the Holy Spirit and this needs to be explained very clearly. The Holy Spirit should be an experience in our spirituality and this could be with the coming in of Christ or this could even be a very distinctive experience as for Peter, the disciples, Paul and others. A lot of teaching is necessary on the Holy Spirit and there is so little of preaching and teaching in our churches today. Our theologians today would prefer to dwell on the existence of God, in questioning Christology, Virgin birth, the Trinity and the resurrection. It is time for them to get on with the God existent and experienced in the Trinity, in the Bible and in the Church.

God to be experienced

Another dimension into which we need to take the Church and Christians too is the dimension of experience. It is interesting that the 12 disciples were followers of Jesus Christ and had experienced the fullness of Jesus Christ and the post-resurrection appearances were so assuring and promising to their faith but still the eleven of them in all probability went for a deeper spiritual experience to the Upper Room in Acts : 2 : 4 and they

experienced in the followers of Jesus Christ and to those who accepted Him as Lord and Saviour and who follow him in His earthly ministry.

The Expression of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit needs to be reflected in human life. Sometimes there is so much of blasphemy when the Holy Spirit is called upon to act after all human manipulations are over. This is certainly not reflective of the third person in the Trinity. When we ask Him to take control to guide, lead and bless us, we allow Him to operate as we proceed on low gear. He does, He acts, He operates. He fills and fulfills and the Holy Spirit must be reflected and experienced in our lives. St. Paul speaks of this in Gal. 5 : 22 & 23 as 'fruits of the Spirit'. A Christ filled with the Holy Spirit makes known the spirit of God within him. A true child of God reflects the glory and splendour of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit becomes the communicator of our lives which need to be 'Fifth Gospel'.

The Explosiveness of the Holy Spirit

Acts 1 : 8 'But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you : and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth'. Makes it very clear that there is always the dent of the Holy Spirit in human life. There is an explosion when the Holy Spirit comes into our lives. He is Dynamis-a dynamite, an explosive. There is a two dimensional action by this explosive power of the Holy Spirit. He blasts us and He enables us to blast Jesus Christ into the world. The Holy Spirit explodes into individual human life and enables individual human life to be an explosive of God in the world. To us we need an explosive Christianity. This is the true understanding of mission. Mission is just exploding Jesus Christ into the world. There can be no mission without the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit exists for the mission of the church.

Conclusion

May we spend much time this Whit Sunday making not only a festival of the Church but a time for reflection and a time for experiencing the Holy Spirit. To many it will also be a time for dedicating our lives afresh to the power of the Holy Spirit so that we will not be what we are but we become launching pads blasting good news into the orbit of the Universe so that Christ exploded in the mission of the world.

Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women 1988-1998

Theme for India: A NEW COMMUNITY, A LIVING COMMUNITY

Introduction

An Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women is being launched. It is a call to the churches to make the real the Christian affirmation of a new community in Christ. It is a call to the churches to plan specific ways by which in the next ten years they will act in solidarity with women both in the church and society. The churches are urged to recognise the leadership, administrative and spiritual gifts of women. The churches are also urged to recognise their diakonal responsibility to involve themselves in the struggles women face in society. It is a call to the churches to become a new community, a living community in Christ.

Leader:

Come let us celebrate together this Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women which is being launched the world over during this season. Let us rejoice as we look back at the contribution women have made to the life of our churches and societies. Let us move forward, through the next ten years, in solidarity with women to remove the obstacles, the stones, that stand in the way of us becoming a new and living community.

'And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome, brought spices so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another '...

'Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?'

As these women of faith set out on a journey to perform an act of love, they remembered the stone—an obstacle they would have to deal with before they could be with their Saviour. And they ask each other,

'Who will roll the stone away?'

When they look up they find the tomb stone rolled away. And they are astonished. Yet, they have the courage to enter into the tomb. It is empty. The angel says to them, 'Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here see; the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples...'

At this season the churches set out on a journey of faith in solidarity with women. We will encounter many stones—obstacles that will have to be rolled out of the way so that we may become a new and living community. We today ask each other.

'Who will roll the stone away?'

There are practices and teachings in the churches that are obstacles to women's creative theological, spiritual and decision-making contribution in church and society. There are structures and patterns of leadership and ministry that block partnership between women and men. We ask ourselves,

'Who will roll the stone away?'

We as a church must recognise that in most instances women experience the worst effects of poverty, economic injustice, racism, casteism, militarism and denial of land and minority rights. Women are the poorest of the poor, always with limited access to food, education and paid work. Women's bodies are abused by medical technology, and sold into prostitution. Women the victims of various forms of violence. Women of the world are asking,

'Who will roll the stone away?'

We as a church are not free from idolatries and power structures that oppress people. We do not always admit that we sin by creating and justifying obstacles that destroy God's purposes for the earth. We do not empower women to challenge oppressive structures in the global community, our country and our church. We as women and men are called to repent and together we say,

'We will roll the stone away?'

We as a church celebrate the visions and commitment of women to the struggles for justice, peace and integrity of creation in our wounded world. Women and men created in the image of God are today all invited to take part in the human responsibility of caring for all of life.

During the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with women, we as a church will rise up and identify the obstacles to women's full and active participation in church and society. We will work to remove the obstacles. We will affirm women's perspectives and contributions. 'We will pluck up and break

(contd. on p. 6)

Hope of the Kingdom

REV. DR. PADMASINI J. GALLUP, Madras

Zecharia prophesied during the time when people exiled in Babylon were returning. After 70 years in exile the people had almost given up hope of ever seeing their homeland again.

But when Babylon fell to Persia, King Cyrus freed the Jews and allowed them to go home.

With great hope and enthusiasm the people began to return to Judah. When they arrived and began to settle down they realized that only a few had returned. Many stayed on, as Josephus, a historian explains, 'because they did not wish to have their possessions'.

This was the first blow to their hope that there were so few to go home and to prepare for the Messianic age.

Zachariah attempted to instill hope in the people by encouraging them to restore the destroyed parts of the Jerusalem Temple because the Temple would be sign of God's presence in the midst of God's people, a focus for gathering people.

But the rebuilding was slow, so few people to do the hard work and fewer resources. The people's hopefulness ebbed farther. It was in the context of hopelessness that Zachariah was called to be a messenger for God's word.

Zechariah, whose name means 'God remembers' was inspired to live up to his name. He reminded the people that as God's chosen, God surely remembered them and as they had expected and hoped, they will witness the dawn of the Messianic age.

He was sure that God's great redemptive acts of the past were leading to the final act of the coming of the Messiah; and a glimpse of this Messianic age he gives in the lesson—neighbours sitting together, in peace and security, entertaining each other. He called on the people to prepare themselves for its coming.

While we declare that the Messianic age was inaugurated in the birth of Jesus, we also acknowledge that God's Kingdom has come in Jesus not because God's creation was prepared for it, but only God's love was so great, it was given as a gift. God sent Jesus in order to teach and show us by example how to prepare for the fulness of the Kingdom.

The reply Jesus gave to the query of Nicodemus was 'Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God'.—This birth was to be through water and the spirit, i.e. Baptism.

Baptism was and is a sign of repentance, a turning away, a decision to change one's old way of life and turn to a life of righteousness and justice.

Zechariah recognised this *moral dimension* to preparedness. He insisted that cultic and ritualistic preparation thro' fasting and prayer missed the mark. And he declared; instead of mourning and fasting, (7:9) ' (Render true judgment that make for peace) Show kindness and mercy each to his brother, do not oppress the widow the fatherless, the sojourner, or the poor (8: 16) speake the truth to one another, do not devise evil in your hearts against one another '.

The kingdom requires the underguiding of moral and ethical values. We tend to overlook this in our effort at development in our outreach projects, on behalf of the poor and needy.

We have followed, generally two ways of response to the needs around us: either thro' charity or through organising the people to help themselves.

There has been very little attempt, if any, to build up morals and ethical values while satisfying physical needs or while organising people to assert their rights.

It is this deficiency that ultimately gives rise to vandalism which we often witness. Teaching people to assert their rights without the moral counterpart of teaching to respect and value the rights of others leads to anarchy. It legitimates taking what you want by violent means.

One of Jesus' temptations was to turn stones into bread. He could have done it on a massive scale, fed the hungry people in Palestine. But he knew that giving people bread and satisfying all their material needs would not really prepare them for a Kingdom of righteousness and justice, love and peace.

Jesus knew he had to teach and show people and help them to change themselves, become different persons, undergo *new birth*. Birth is a painful, shocking process, for the baby as well as the mother. The newborn creature has to struggle to keep alive; it has to gasp and get its first breath or be slapped into taking that first painful breath. Many difficulties accompany birth; it is not at all an easy process although a natural one.

Jesus knew that getting ready for God's Kingdom means people have to struggle on their own, to learn to build the essential moral foundation with his help.

The Church, you and I have been given this mandate by Jesus, as his representatives in the world, to build about this kind of *new birth in society*; which means in ourselves as well as in our neighbours; a new building of moral, ethical values to underguide all of life.

The Church has tended to look to the far-off future for the fulfilment of God's Kingdom. The Church has been like the people in Zechariah's time thinking of themselves as too few, too weak; we tend toward hopelessness.

As in his day, Zechariah's word reassures us. 'God remembers'—God has chosen you to prepare the way for God's Kingdom—the messianic age. Let us recall the description of this age: (8: 4) Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with a staff in hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.

In Zechariah's words we can see for ourselves a renewal of hope; because we have already experienced the beginning of its fulfilment in Jesus, who calls us to repent and offers us *new birth*.

'May we be ready and willing to bring about a new society through rebirth.'

A Testimony of Christ's Love

A Tribute to Prof. Arthur Bagshaw

MR. K. MICHAEL VIJAYA RAO, M.A. *Giddalur (Nandyal)*

Breathes there a student with mind so opaque,
Who has not sustained the indelible impressions,
Of that lofty mind and kind disposition,
Whose love of learning and grace of spirit,
Has inspired generations of pupils.

As a promising young missionary of the Church
Mission Society,
Arthur Bagshaw arrived in India at the age of twenty-
seven;
And began ministering in the old Dornakal diocese.
This very affable missionary adorned the portals of
learning,
In Noble College, Andhra Christian College and
Christian Mission Society College.

In space of time, reckoning to fifty-three years,
He traversed across the educational and religious
scenario,
Of this vast peninsula of South India,
Teaching, preaching and praying for a new order in
India,
For self-determination and educational excellence
as well.

Grand and majestic is the pageant of memorabilia,
That floats across the minds of those, shepherded by
him,
Who had felt the radiance of his goodness
And witnessed the fulness of his heart;
Be it in the class-room, the assembly hall or the
chapel.

This onward Christian Mentor clad in cassock and
girdled,
Moving from his moderate upper rooms in Noble
Hall to St. John's Chapel,
Summoned his little flock to gather the morning bliss
there.
Proceeding thereafter directly to the dining hall to
mark attendance,
His gaze of disapproval, he transfixed on the
absentees for the morning adoration.

Familiar is the spectacle of the Professor peddling to
the College;
Where he taught English Drama with a fervour
unequalled;
Enthralling us with his clear and musical intonations
and dramatic gestures,
Filling our minds with an admixture of enlightenment
And intoxication of the spirit of Stratford-on-Avon.

Brilliant with an intellectual tempo, a welcome place,
Was his parlour for his students,
Who could pick up any book of their choice noting
in the register there.
While lingering in and out the much mellowed mind,
Noticed and systematically fed the reading habit of
the earnest ones.

A streak of light-vein was not lacking;
For the sing-song on Fridays was a time of recreation,
When we bellowed, 'All the birds of the air fell a
sighing and sobbing'.
The Professor joining us in song and action delighted
us;
Enabling us to imbibe the spirit of healthy humour.

The annual week-end outings at the sea-side near
Chirala,
Were they not the high tides of relaxation?
While the time paddled at the edge, the adventurous
ventured a farther;
We abandoned not to feasting and gamboling but
gloried,
In partaking the Lord's Supper, on the terrace, at
sun rise, on the day of Sabbath.

The act of adoration on Sunday remained impressive,
As he led the congregation in quiet humility and
faith;
When words flew like chips as the sculptor chiselled,
Testifying the Psalmist's supplication:
'Open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew
forth Thy praise.'

'Question Hour', on the Fourth Sunday in the
month,
Bore a special significance for St. John's Chapel;
When many in the flock and many more outside the
flock assembled.
'Rely not on knowledge obtained by thought or
reading
But wait upon the Lord for His revelation,' cautioned
the seeker after Truth.

Why did God choose Palestine for the birth of the
Messiah?
Fulfilling the prophecies, Messiah was born in the
forty-second from Abraham,
In the promised land, of milk and honey, for the
patriarch,
And besides, Palestine was centrally situated in the
ancient world,
Forming a part of the Great Roman Empire, was the
reply given.

Expression dramatised, lending to clarity of under-
standing,
With elaborate notes written in an angelic fashion,
The erudite scholar admirably adopted to the Indian
University demands.
While evaluating, the Professor acknowledged the
faculty of memory of the taught,
Rightly apportioning the credit for the language and the
thought-content to himself.

The doyen of learning taught at CMS College, Kottayam ;
 Loved and was loved with exceeding endearment,
 That even after retirement, he reappeared there every February,
 To refresh and refurbish the intellectual and spiritual aspirations,
 Of the many expectant and yearning minds and souls.

Alert in mind, evincing an awareness and commitment

To values of the spiritual splendour amazing,
 Deploing the mushroom growth of schools for filthy lucre,

Encouraging and guiding the genuine endeavour,
 Was this benign soul loved by Indians at every level at Kodaikanal.

'Spirit of Oxford', was he acclaimed by an American Missionary ;
 'A pastor who related the essence of the gospel to the core of life', witnessed a Dutch Missionary ;
 'His ministry was a perfect expression of ecumenical sharing', observed the Bishop in Madurai ;
 'Though we struggle now, it will be beautiful in the hereafter',
 Was the triumphant declaration of this shepherd of St. Peter's ere he died.

Affectionately and adoringly sobriqueted as 'Bags',
 This magnificent and mellifluous voice and spirit,
 Engendering a serenity born of deep commitment,
 Lightening the spirit and enlightening the mind,
 Remains for generations of his students, 'a testimony of Christ's love'.

REV. ARTHUR BAGSHAW

Rev. Andrew Wingate writes :-

'Bags', as he asked me and everyone else to call him, came to the old Dornakal diocese in 1934 at the age of 27. He served for 53 years in South India as Chaplain and teacher of English Literature in colleges in Andhra and Kerala, and as CMS representative in Kerala also. From 1973, until his death, he was pastor of St. Peter's Church, in Kodaikanal.

Many generations have benefited from Bags' love of teaching. His sermons, too, are remembered by all of us who visited Kodai, for the way they linked his love of poetry and central truths of his faith, and a Dutch missionary friend said of him, "I remember him as a pastor who related the heart of the gospel to the core of

my life. When I had to take difficult decisions, guided me in a way that I will never forget."

Bags remained as English after 53 years in India, when he left Leeds. He never knew an Indian language. Yet he transcended this, and, as I saw in Kodai, was loved by Indians at every level. Bags died in deep confidence of the Easter message. Shortly before he died, during the pain of his last illness, he said, 'Though we struggle now, it will be beautiful in the hereafter'. The Bishop in Madurai, with whom I shared the taking of the funeral, said that in his commitment to India and the CSI Bags' ministry was a perfect expression of ecumenical sharing, which we are unlikely to see again'. He died on 13th October 1987.

from CSI News London

Ecumenical Decade of Churches. . . .—(Contd. from p. 3)

down, build and plant.' We will participate with God in transforming the world. We will say to each other,

'We will roll the stone away'

We will become a new and living community in Christ, a growing stream of resurrection people, a people of God on a faith journey of hope. We will be filled with the inevitable fears and doubts caused by the stones we will encounter on the way *but* we will move on compelled by love. We will find the challenge of the risen Saviour.

'Do not be amazed ; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here. . . . but go tell his disciples. . .'

Prepared by
 Ecumenical Decade Monitoring Group of the World Council of Churches Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society.

Prayer (All)

O Risen Saviour we remember these three little-remembered women who set out on a journey of faith to pay their last respects to their Saviour,

mindless of the stone they will encounter on the way. We too set out on a journey with the women of the world today. Empower us and send us out into the world so that we can together identify and remove the obstacles that stand in our way and remove them so that the church and society can become a new and living community. In Christ's name we pray.

Leader :

Be with your church O Lord as we plan and act on specific ways to respond to the struggles of women both in church and society. Send us Lord into the world renewed by our Holy Spirit, to accept the challenge and to discover the joy of new community.

Therefore go—carrying with you
 the peace of Christ
 the Love of God
 and the encouragement of the Holy Spirit
 so that we may become a new and living community.

'Ordained to be A Priest'

RT. REVD. DR. D. C. GORAI, D.D. CNI, Calcutta

We ordain men and women to the priestly, the pastoral ministry in our Churches. It is essentially a preaching, teaching, and sacramental ministry which equips the people of God to be true followers of Jesus and to witness to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus says, 'I have come that they may have life, and have abundantly'. So our ministry is life-oriented, people-oriented, rooted in Christ, and related to the contemporary situation in society and the community.

A pastoral and priestly ministry is not a 'status' but a vocation—men and women responding to the 'Inner Call' to obey, to follow, to suffer and to make sacrifices in order to love and serve the Lord and to participate in the Universal Pastoral Ministry of the Church. It is because of this 'Inner Urge' and 'Passion for God's work', that Church Leaders select such men and women with vocation and competence for full-time ordained ministry in the life of the Church.

In the past, committed and competent men and women have joined the ministry. In the future, too, many more suitable persons will join the 'Ministry'.

The ministry belongs to the people of God, the Community of faithful ones. Hence the Community has to play a supportive role to the Ministers so that they may fulfil their 'vocation'. Vocation matures in the fellowship of the Community and that is why, the Community has a very positive role to play in maximising the fruits of all such vocations.

The Community must demonstrate love and respect for priests and pastors, and pray for them—uphold them in their work and enable them to do their work efficiently.

As a Community, we have to pose a challenge to competent and committed men and women to come forward for a full-time, paid ministry. The Church in India should be concerned with providing attention and importance for adequate and appropriate theological education and skill-oriented training for its future pastors, leaders and members. It is very important that all such recruitment for the ministry should be made with the utmost care and caution. This will eliminate the possibility of the selection of candidates who may lack proper motivation and orientation for pastoral ministry and leadership. We have to ensure that leaders/pastors do not become a liability in the

life of the Church by blocking creative and dynamic growth.

Pastors/leaders for the 21st century have to be men and women with a high degree of christian commitment, spiritual holiness, intellectual ability and the capacity to work with people. It is only then that they can truly be agents of change, growth and development. It is high time that in every church there should be men and women with higher theological education and training. Such people must always be ready to launch into the deep for a more risk-taking ministry. They must be facilitators who enable great things to happen in the life of the church and the wider community. Therefore, it is necessary that the churches give priority consideration to providing and imparting relevant theological training to its members. Society is undergoing very rapid and changes, and therefore our 'cadre workers', leaders and pastors must be provided proper orientation to meet this rapid change, in every sphere. Theological education has a very important role to play. We expect young theological graduates to commit themselves to the work of God, with a genuine vocation for the pastoral ministry of the church, in order to nurture believers, equipping them to be the 'church-on-the-frontline'.

When the priest/pastor accepts the vocation to be a priest in our present day situation, he faces a predicament. His wife, children or relatives are not always equally motivated. Some of them may not have the same religious and spiritual experience. Sometimes some of them may even cherish different views of life and vocation. They may also exercise a negative influence and pressure on the Pastors and Ministers. This contributes to a very difficult and conflicting situation. Every ordained person has to face such situations in his own way with courage, and confidence, remaining loyal to his call his dream and his vision. This is part of the loneliness factor in the life of a priest or pastor. This is an area where the Church has to exercise proper pastoral care and keep close watch and continue to render necessary support and encouragement so that they may overcome these difficulties.

If some pastors and priests have problems and difficulties, they have to be handled with love, care and compassion. It is possible that some people start their life with great idealism and commitment, but in the course of time, they lose their original vocation and develop along different lines. This eventuality has to be dealt with pastorally and administratively as per the discipline of the Church.

Church also has to look its ministers for sufficient material provision. Our priests are family men, therefore, as an organised Community, we must see that adequate decent-living provisions are made for them. The Community must take a positive outlook and show concern for the well being and welfare of ordained people. It is a matter of great sorrow and pain that in some congregations, there are a few people who are not only indifferent to the above concerns but are also uncharitable and cruel. Good people cannot remain spectators. It is high time that as a Community we consolidate our good-will and positive work force to counteract all such negations.

The life of a priest or pastor in a full-time ministry is very difficult. Positive family support for developing the best is an essential condition for making a contribution to the life of the Church. The administration dealing with priest/Bishop/other workers—should be concerned for the image of the Church. Hence, prompt action must be taken as soon as it is discovered that somebody is missing his mark or misusing his office/position and vocation. Frail and human as we are, there will always be lapses on the part of the ordained pastors as well as the unordained leaders/members. But the strength and beauty of ordination is that it is a 'Covenant Life' a covenant between the ordained and God, a covenant between the ordained and people. This covenant has to be renewed from time to time. It is part of the total of life of witness and ministry of the whole people of God. We must form a right understanding that the ordained ministry is only a small cell of the total ministry of believers.

In Baptism, all believing Christians have been ordained to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord—God and Saviour. They have been chosen as a special people—the Royal Priests of God. It is in this context of the royal priesthood of the people of the God, the ordained ministry has to be understood—and expressed, in the contemporary situation where love, peace and justice must flourish so that the world may believe that the Kingdom of God is present here and now.

There was a time when many parents used to take vows to offer at least one of their children to the Priesthood—perhaps, some still do even though their desire may not always be fulfilled. It is always sacrificial decision when somebody decides to accept the life a Priest. Every ordination should be regarded as an occasion of joy and celebration for the Christian community. In our Church, priests normally have a family to maintain on a salary which is low. We, as a Community, must desire that our full-time Presbyters and Deacons are provided with adequate provisions for a normal, minimum, decent-living. Every person in the Church must pray for all priests and

enable them to fulfill their vocation.

May I appeal to the Leaders to introduce a new tradition—which may become a healthy tradition in due course of time. My proposal is very simple. At the time of ordination of a full-time paid Ministry, we as a community should make a generous contribution individually and collectively so that the amount may be designated for the welfare of the candidates, especially for their future benefit. The money, say Rs. 5,000 per candidate, should be invested in their names and given to them after 15, 20 or 25 years, as the case may be, so that this may meet their future needs, especially for the education of children or towards living accomodation etc.

If our own children are unable to join the full-time ministry why should we not all come forward and help each of our ordinands with a good start on their ministry?

Every time a person is ordained as a Presbyter in full time paid ministry the Diocese should make such an appeal to raise an amount as may be decided by the Diocese, for each candidate. There should be a system of assessment from each Pastorate/Institution/Programme/Units and of course, general to all individual believers. It would not be a problem to raise say Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 5,000 per candidate for this good-will investment for Presbyters, at the very beginning of their career. The community must celebrate such events participatively in every possible way.

It is time to express our good-will and solidarity in the Pastoral Ministry and encourage and challenge competent people to come forward and strengthen the pastoral ministry of the Church.

Today there is a great dearth of suitable candidates for the Ministry. We as a Community must tackle this problem with concern for the Lord's work. The Lord said—'The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of harvest that He will send out workers to gather in His harvest' Mt. 9 : 37-38. As a Community, let us pray and act with imagination and compassion for all the workers in His vineyard. Community participation is very necessary to turn ideas into reality. Let us act as our brothers' keeper—let us realise 'whoever does what my Father in heaven wants him to do, is my brother, my sister and my mother'. Mt. 12 : 49-50. Indeed, this is the very basis of a new Community committed to do the work of God in furtherance of the Kingdom of God. 'In the Kingdom of God truth is apprehended not by those who stand by as spectators, but by those who do and serve.'

'Go out into the world to love and to serve the Lord.'

Assist Churches in their Mission to the Young

BISHOP RICHARD LIPP*

Some time ago Paul P. visited us who is a friend since the beginning of my missionary period in India. In those early days he was one of about fifty students who lived in the residential hostel of the Basel Mission on Netturhill. They were going to high school and a teachers training college in Tellicherry about an hour's distance away.

Paul is about ten years younger than I. He became a teacher in a middle school and soon after was appointed by the Government as school inspector. Before his retirement he had become school inspector of a district in North Malabar. This career he owed to the fact that he had been an inmate of a students hostel.

Apart from his profession as teacher and school inspector he was for a long time and is still today the Director of the Evangelical Lay Brotherhood. The beginning of the brotherhood has its origin in this hostel.

The director of the teachers training school was also the house father of the students' hostel. He kept reminding the young people to do something for Jesus Christ. A young missionary who was in that station supported this initiative. On Sundays and holidays and also during the great Hindu festivals young people went into the villages with trumpets and big drums. They wanted to witness to the Gospel. I remember quite clearly the beat of the drum under the leaves of the tall coconut palms. The whole coastal area of the State of Kerala is lined by these coconut palms. The sound of the drum resounded as if in a mighty cathedral.

The lay brotherhood which was founded in my youth still exists today in all parts of the country, for the students returned to their villages and towns and continued the work they had been doing in the students' hostel. In this way prayer cells were founded in many places. Already at that time I had been deeply convinced of the importance and need for such hostels. This was clearly the way in which the Church through its varieties of training courses could educate young people to be effective in public life also.

* Bishop Richard Lipp, the author of this article, was in India as an active Missionary and later on Bishop for over thirty years. He has formed and determined decisively the development and the way of Kindernothilfe and its ministry. Later on, from 1967-1975 he was the President of Kindernothilfe. His 80th birthday was celebrated on the 8th April.

This article has been written recently on request of Kindernothilfe with the aim of highlighting some of the basic motives of its ministry.

Our mission was very poor before the last world war. The German Government at that time had no money for missionary work. Therefore, we were forced to look for financial support in Switzerland, and we also struck on a new idea, the idea of foster parents. I made the first photos of children which we sent with the necessary details to the mission-board in Switzerland. The Basel Mission found faithful foster parents for these children. These foster parents often financially supported their child in India till it went to college.

Here in Germany it is impossible to imagine the tremendous joy of the Indian young people. To go to a school, specially to high school, had been so far almost impossible for Christian children. After we had arranged the fostership system it became very clear to me that we should give the possibility of an education in schools to much more young people.

The war made an end to these plans. As missionaries, we were interned and torn away from our actual ministry. But during the war and in internment camp I had the opportunity of being together with many missionaries, also with Catholic ones. I got to know people who had been active in different parts of India. The hard work which we had been doing during the pre-war period in Malabar was being done more intensively by other missions in other parts of India, and as I learned later, to an even larger extent by missionary societies from other European countries, from America, Australia and New Zealand; practically from all parts of the world. This work done by all these missionary societies was understood to be only one part of their missionary task.

They all established hostels, elementary schools and schools for higher education specially for children and adolescents from areas where there was little opportunity for schooling.

The first Moderator of the Church of South India, P. Summitra, said once that we needed schools and hostels today more than even before, and he spoke from his own experience. In his home village there was an elementary school but it was much too small, moreover it was only meant for children from the higher castes. He, as an Harijan, had to learn his first letters by drawing them in the sand under a tree.

In Germany boarding schools have no such tradition. In spite of these difficulties this type of education was not necessarily of a lower quality.

What had not been possible before the war became unexpectedly possible after the war and to an extent

(Contd. on p. 14)

Equipping Youth in Mission

MR. D. DANIEL EZHILARASU, *Vellore*

A group of twenty young people from the Church of South India met at the Dhynashram, Madras for a consultation on 'Equipping Youth in Mission' from 8th to 10th March 1988. It was a very valuable period of study and reflection for me, to share and learn with co-participants.

The Rev. Roderick, Huwitt, Secretary for Education in Mission, CWM, London and the Rev. M. Azariah, General Secretary, CSI Synod facilitated the process. The presence of both of them was very useful and inspiring. In particular I was immensely impressed by the depth of thoughts and the skills of Rev. Roderick as a powerful communicator which has left an indelible impression on the participants. Some of the statements are still echoing very forcefully with me as with other participants I believe—of quote a few :—

- * Young people are strategic allies in Education in Mission.
- * The Heart and Minds of young people need to be turned inside out.
- * Mission in Christ's way requires us to know both the Text and context seriously.
- * People do not plan to fail ; but they only fail to plan.
- * Controversy is that which enlightens us to challenge and come out with new ideas.
- * 'Consensus values' is that which binds people together.
- * Never put a fullstop when God puts a comma.
- * Mission needs to be looked at from a global perspective and related to the local congregation.

We were challenged to look at what a Mission is, the role of the Church and Youth, and how to equip Youth in Mission.

What is Mission ?

Many a time we miss the link between the Text and the Context. We normally say that 'it is the Mission of the Church' without realising that the church has no mission of its own. It's only God's mission in which the Church is a creative partner. Nevertheless the testimony of the church is weakened as we do not practise what we profess. Often we fail to recognise the needs and concerns of our fellowmen in our own community. Thus we have privatised our faith. In our mission work, very rarely we find people as subjects. Somewhere along the line, we miss the main core of mission. Then what is mission? Mission means learning and living with people. Mission means the link between the text and the context. Mission means building and restoration of relationship. Mission involves taking risks. Mission means, healing, teaching, singing, preaching etc.

The Church and Youth

In these days we notice our young people being disenchanted from the church, why? One answer may be the method of teaching in the Church. Yet another may be the failure of the church to recognise the importance of the presence and participation of youth. There are many more answers. As long as church leaders have smooth sailing in the congregation that's fine ; they do not care about young people. The youth who are in majority seem to be powerless in decision making. The church

has miserably failed to identify and articulate the aspirations of our young people. Recognising the useful role of youth and educating them to become aware of their duties and responsibilities should go hand in hand.

In a particular congregation in Britain a gradual fall in Sunday School attendance was observed. The pastor was much concerned. He met the children one day. He asked them to tell him why they were not interested to attend Sunday School and at the same time promised them, of his intention to consider their response seriously. The children opened up themselves and said, 'Pastor, we go to school all through the week and again Sunday we have to go to Sunday school. Our mom and dad do not go to any Sunday school. Why should we alone be a special category'. The responses of the children resulted in arranging Sunday school for various age groups—adults, youth, children in that parish. It is open to all of us to examine whether the responses of our children, in particular our young people are seriously considered, while engaging in Mission.

EQUIPPING YOUTH IN MISSION

Rev. Roderick Huwitt introduced look, listen, think, decide, gather resources and act—the six aspects of how our Youth can be equipped in Mission. There was a Biblically based presentation followed by group discussion and plenary on each of these aspects.

Though every aspect of equipping youth in Mission was very important, to me 'looking' was more significant. Not that it is base for all human activity but it helps every individual to maximise ones purview of operation and minimises the distortion. When we read the Bible, we can notice how the various authors have emphasised this aspect—'Seeing' or 'looking'. At the same time we can also notice the struggle of our Master to get His disciples to see, to look at.

Being able to look differently requires, according to Rev. Roderick 'an eye operation'. Youth who are strategic allies in Mission need to learn the art of looking differently anew. Looking at things differently involves creativity. To be creative should be the hallmark of persons involved in Mission. One way of describing creativity is the ability to look at things in a new way to be free from preconceived ideas and notions and able to accept that things can be done differently. If we could accept this fundamental concept then the possibilities for being creative in our daily lives, particularly in Mission work is unlimited. In such cases even tension becomes creative tension.

Especially for Youth today, being creative is an additional dimension which will help them to reorganise their intellectual faculties. What is necessary today is to identify and harness the resources and use them for the glory of God.

It was fitting to have had a meaningful discussion on 'Equipping Youth in Mission' when the CSI has 'Equipping God's people for Ministry in the World' as its theme for the biennium 1988-90. Certainly Youth need to be equipped. Some-times opportunities are given to ill-equipped persons which causes tremendous damage to the community. Equipping Youth is very vital as they are not only leaders of tomorrow but leaders of today.

No Longer Servants

DR. RAYMOND FUNG*

Some time back I was working in Hong Kong among low-income people in industrial areas and high-rise estates. At one point I was invited, together with a newly converted Christian, who was a factory worker, to a consultation organised by an international parachurch organisation.

It was a very well financed and reputable group which at that time was very seriously contemplating a global programmatic thrust towards the poor—hence the consultation and our presence there. At one point, the group was struggling with formulating its own understanding of how it related to the churches and to the poor.

The concepts of 'partners' and 'servants'—these two concepts found their way into the deliberation and they generated much excitement. So soon the formulation was put forward that these particular Christian organisations should understand themselves as partner to the churches and servant to the poor. My worker friend was asked his opinion. He was unused to expressing himself in public, he hesitated and then he blurted out something like this. He said 'Poor people like me wouldn't know how to be your master. I may know how to be your partner, at least I'd like to try.' Later on I was told that this international Christian organisation had eventually decided to stay with the original formulation.

While they might not know very well how to be servants to the poor, they were sure they knew even less about being partners to the poor. So, since that day, I began thinking about the usefulness of the 'servant' language in the description of the Christian relationship both to God and to the world. I began to question if the servant concept is still appropriate for the communication of the Gospel today.

On the way back from the consultation I recalled the words of Jesus which form the title of the sermon. In his last farewell conversation and prayer, recorded in *John* chapters 13 to 17, Jesus told his disciples, 'I no longer call you servants'. No longer servants—I showed my worker friend the text. I could see he was surprised and his face lit up.

An important reason why the servant motif is difficult for us to use in our understanding and implementation of missionary evangelism is that the scriptures as a whole are indiscriminately general as to what the word means.

In the scriptures a servant is anyone who performs a service, ranging from slaves to Kings, from idol worshippers to followers of Yahweh. There is, by and large, no agreed circle of theological substance to the term. Its meaning comes from its immediate historical and sociological context. Under the circumstances there is scriptural warrant for practically any claim to servanthood.

I am still receiving letters from senior officials of the Hong Kong government which close with the inevitable phrase 'I remain your obedient servant', and I discovered it is always I who did the obeying.

The Christian churches, too, having decided to speak the servant language, have to fill the word with whatever meaning we happen to derive from the world we are a part of. And more often than not it does not quite add up, as my worker friend immediately discovered at that consultation. The scriptural references to servant are too general and multi-faceted to serve as a guide for Christian mission and evangelism.

There is, however, one single exception which also happens to be of crucial theological significance. I refer to the chapter in *Isaiah* on the Servant of the Lord. Here the meaning of servant is clearly understood in terms of obedience and undeserved suffering. But it is not simply obedience and suffering. It is redemptive obedience and redemptive suffering. The Servant of the Lord did not simply suffer. The Servant suffered to take away the sins of the world and to make many to be called just. Here the servant reference is so specific and so uniquely defined that we mortals could only approach it with awe. This, I think, is Holy Ground.

We do not read *Isaiah* 53 and say, 'Yes of course, this is what we are called to do and to be. In Asia, in Africa, in Britain's troubled cities, deprived countryside, yes this is what we are called to be in the affluent suburbs.' No, Christians and churches are not called to be the Servant of the Lord as God revealed in *Isaiah*. Our role is not to suffer to redeem. It is simply not in our cards. Our role is to turn to the Messiah who gave his life for us and tell the story of the one who alone suffers to redeem.

Of course Christians and Christian churches do serve and some of us do suffer. And our services and suffering can be a tremendous evangelistic witness. But we are never intended to be *Isaiah's* Servant of the Lord and can never be. If we think we can be, or if we pretend to be, we do so at our spiritual peril and at the peril of Christian mission.

Our role is much easier and much more modest but it is tailor-made for us. Our role is to point the world to the Servant of the Lord.

'Behold, look!'

'He was wounded for our transgressions'

He was bruised for our iniquities

Upon him was the chastisement that made us whole—

Behold look and with his stripes we are healed.'

So for all these reasons I believe there is a case for reorientation of mission theology, of evangelistic approaches and methods away from the 'servant' thinking with whatever content we happen to have given it.

* This was the sermon preached at Partnership House, London.

turn now to how Jesus related to men and women of his day, and I find that every encounter contains, and is characterised by, a strong dose of challenge: to the leper the challenge to present his body to the priest; to the paralytic the challenge to rise and take up his bed and walk; to yet another the challenge to stretch out his withered hand for the first time in his life; to the woman about to be stoned, the challenge to lead a new life and to sin no more. In every instance the challenge was given together with the offer of healing and of forgiveness—that is, the capacity to receive challenge and to respond to it.

Of course there are those whom Jesus healed and, according to the Gospel narratives, did not challenge—the person who was demon possessed in *Mark I* verse 23, the woman with the blood disease, and the widow's son. These incidences, I think, can be understood in the way Archbishop Oscar Romero understood them.

On being asked how was his understanding of sin in terms of structural evil, and his involvement in combating systematic violence, how he could reconcile this theological understanding with his habit of giving small sums of money to the poor who came to see him, the Archbishop replied, 'These are my wounded soldiers. What else can you do with wounded soldiers?' The element of challenge, even challenge to the poor and the powerless and the weakest, remains that which makes Jesus's ministry powerful, uniquely powerful.

At this point let me share a story of evangelism from my own experience. I experienced it in Hong Kong. Many Christians in many parts of the world have similar experiences. I'm sure Christians in China experience it. And I'm sure many Christians in Latin America and many parts of the world have experience it. I had been meeting with a group of dockyard workers fairly regularly. Their families were in China and they were in Hong Kong and they wanted to be together to eat and have fun.

On one occasion they began to make jokes about the Christian faith in a rather good-natured sort of way. With equal humour I told them to shut up. 'I bet you have never read the Bible so what right do you have to talk about Christianity; what do you know about Jesus?' One of them took up the challenge. 'OK, we'll read the Bible, but I don't know anything about Bibles so you lead us.' At that point we had a Bible group going. I soon regretted it.

The first few times were a disaster, and then another occasion we met and I urged them to open the Bible to *Luke 5*, the story of Jesus on the Lake Gennesaret. Peter and John were fishing, Jesus came to them. It was pretty dull and the workers were not interested until one of them shouted all of a sudden. He read this particular verse, where Peter complained to Jesus, 'We've worked all night and we've caught nothing'; and this husky fellow said in joy: 'Here is someone who knows what life is about'.

I turned out that he had discovered in this one verse his life story. He had worked for over 30 years in the dock, he was not a poor man, he was not hungry, but yet had nothing to show for it except a nice Seiko watch. At this point the Bible came alive to this person. He saw his life story set out in this particular chapter. Nobody gave a hoot in Hong Kong about a person working 35 years with nothing to show for it. But in the world of Jesus somebody cared.

So this group of dockyard workers started to tell their stories—their stories of pain, of suffering, of loneliness of difficulty. At that point I realised that the scriptures became real to them. Peter became real to them and Jesus Christ became real to them. The human story was interfact with the biblical story.

That, of course, is not the end of the story. We went on with our Bible study and discovered how Jesus helped Peter and John fish, and these people were happy. And then we later discovered Jesus asked Peter and John to give up their fish and their boat and these men said, 'Well Peter didn't get a good deal from Jesus?' and you could understand why. The Gospel comes as a challenge as well as a comfort. I think people understand the biblical challenge, there is no alternative but to preach a Gospel which comforts, yet certainly, but which also challenges.

I would like now to come to *John* chapter 15. Jesus was keenly aware that his time on earth was drawing to a close. He still had a lot to say to his followers. At one point he said to his disciples, 'I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead I have called you friends for everything that I learnt from my Father I have made known to you.'

Here Jesus gives a very specific meaning to servant. A servant does not know his master's business. The master gives an order; the servant carries it out. The master does not explain why, a master does not show what lies behind the order or its probable consequences. And the servant does not ask. The servant does not know and he is not required to know his master's mind. The master pronounces, the servant accepts the pronouncement.

This is not what Jesus wants of his followers. Jesus wants to take them into his confidence, he wants to give a full account of himself. 'For everything I have learnt from my Father is made known to you.' Here, I believe, we can derive an alternative vision of the Church's missionary role in the world. It is accountability. It is the role of explaining to the nation, to our next-door neighbour, who we are, what we think, why we take certain actions; why we don't, and cannot, take certain actions. It is to be answerable to the world. It is the task of giving an account of the hope that is in us.

And, if I may take a little liberty, of giving an account of the fear that is in us, of our limitations, of the Church's aspirations and our failures. It is not to be a servant who has no agenda of his or her own. Nor to be a master out to impose his or her will. But as one who recognises a built-in un-breakable bond between one's self and one's neighbours, and therefore decide to be answerable to our neighbours.

This concept of accountability is fundamentally the biblical concept of God's covenant with us. It does not assume equality of power in the parties concerned. Neither is his goal a balancing of power; he does not speak the language of servant/master or the language of power. He speaks about each being accountable to the other. It assumes that all the parties concerned are inextricably bound in together. Accountability assumes a relationship of fundamental oneness. It does not speak about parties being equal in power, it speaks of each party being accountable to the other.

What I am trying to say is that God's covenant with us requires that Christians in churches become accountable to people outside the churches, that we give an account of ourselves to the world, especially to people of no account, people who do not count at all. For God, through his covenant, has made himself accountable to humanity.

Practically, this means that Christians must cultivate a permanent awareness that people outside the Church are our 'constituencies', though they do not have membership. They do not have votes in our business sessions, they do not pay our salaries and our bills. They are those to whom the Church must report itself and explain its belief and its action. The Church declares it is in covenant with the world.

Such a declaration on the part of the Church of course does not mean mutual accountability. The Church being accountable to the world does not mean that the world accepts accountability to the Church. Our accountability does not require reciprocity on the part of the other parties. But accountability fulfilled does give one the right to challenge the other, without threat, without shame. 'I've done my part, have you done yours?' 'I have followed Jesus, have you considered that?'

The Church's unilateral declaration of accountability to those outside of the Church forces the issue. It rules out Christian indifference, that's obvious. It also asserts that humanity, salvation and liberation are matters ultimately between them and their God. But as far as the Church is concerned, if we wish to declare the Good News that God has made himself accountable to humanity today, then the Church must be willing to be so accountable.

So, no longer servants, no longer masters, as friends, as equals, the Church approaches the world. What do we have to communicate? What is the Good News? What is the Good News in no longer servants? The Good News is found in the words that Jesus communicated to everyone who drew near him. The Good News is: 'Take up your cross and follow me.'

For a long time I failed to understand this as good news. I've been reading it in the capacity of servants. In that capacity I heard a call to suffering and to sacrifice. But having heard, 'No longer servants', I've learnt to hear it in the language of accountability. Take up your own cross and follow me. It's no longer a call to pain and suffering. It is an invitation to the companionship of Jesus. It is an invitation to community with fellow believers. It is an offering of direction and a rejection of self-

pity. It is the call to do great things with Jesus, a challenge that makes joyful sense to, I believe, men and women today. It is the good news that in the footsteps of Jesus and in the company of the Church, a person, any person, is and can be responsible for his or her life and for that of others.

Half of the world believes today that a person is responsible for his or her own destiny. You are poor because you are lazy. You are unemployed because you are no good. On the other hand, half the world believes that a person is not responsible for his or her destiny. Big brother knows what is best for you. 'You are out in the streets because you are a victim of society. But when Jesus issues the call to personal responsibility he takes it out of the realm of law and places it in the realm of grace.

With Jesus, in the fellowship of his followers, you are and can be responsible for your life. And indeed for that of the world. Will this not speak to the poor; to the marginalised, to the alienated youth in our troubled cities and deprived countryside, indeed to the affluent suburbs?

No longer servants. I recall at this point the prodigal son who also has heard this announcement. He had left his home, he had gone to worship and serve the God of mammon. Eventually he discovered its falsity. He wants to come home. He declares his intention to be a servant to his clan. He is accepted home eventually, but not as a servant.

Should this awakening come it would be critically crucial for the evangelisation of Europe—whether the Christian Church behaves like the father or that it behaves like the eldest son. The obedient, long-suffering and righteous elder son is prepared to accept his brother, he is prepared to accept his brother home as a servant, no question about that. But he would as surely lose his brother in the end. But the Good News is that the father steps out and embraces his younger son, contradicts the secular surrender of his younger son, repudiates the religious righteousness of his elder son. 'No longer servants' to both the younger son and the elder son. And this secures the unity of the family, the happy return of the prodigal.

'No longer servants.' I dare to echo the words of Christ Jesus. It is not a cry of triumph, nor a shout of defiance. I dare echo the words out of a sense of simple straightforward recognition of my own limitations and the limitation of the Christian Church. I dare echo the words in response to what I see to be the aspirations of humanity today. And above all I dare to echo the words 'No longer servants' out of a strong desire to have a closer walk with men and women outside and inside the Church and a closer walk with my God.

Writers Workshop

'After a long time, Writers Workshop of this nature... acclaimed by an established writer.' 'We are indeed grateful to the Communications Department for bringing us together and gave us the opportunity to take part in the Workshop.'

'We were made to write; we produced something...—a joyous expression of their satisfaction.'

The two-days Writers Workshop held in Suvantha Vani Vijayawada, in many ways was a successful venture. There were about 40 participants who came from all over Andhra Pradesh—15 from the 6 dioceses of the Church of South India and the rest from the other churches all of them are writers to a measure.

Moderator Victor Premasagar inaugurated the Writers Workshop. In his inaugural address he exhilarated the writers to take up the issues of the downtrodden, the neglected lot of the society, the marginalised ones and the oppressed people—the lowest rung of the society. Relating it to the VELCOM, vision for Equipping the Local Congregations in Mission, the Moderator said that the topics of utopian nature no longer hold water; the wounds, the hurts and the aspirations of the people should receive prime importance. Congregations should become caring, sharing and serving communities. Only then they become Christ centered communities. Writers should fulfil their mission by going to the people and reflecting the people's mood in their writings.

Bishop T. B. D. Prakasarao, who presided over the inaugural function, said that it is high time for the writers to encourage congregations to 'live for others'. Many people are selfish, the Bishop said, it is the duty of the writer to make them realise that as members of the church, they should serve all the people who are in need.

Dr. D. V. Daniel spoke on the theme, 'the role of the writer in the mission of the Church'. Citing a number of

examples he said that the writers are the agents to change the patterns of the society and they should aim to bring change for the well-being of the society.

Prof. P. Dharmagnani, the C.L.S. Editor of English publications, presided over the second session in which Dr. D. V. Daniel spoke. He cautioned the writers 'unless you are fully equipped with the 'tools of writing' your efforts will not bear fruit', he emphasised the importance of such workshops where one could learn a lot from others' experience.

Rev. Dass Babu with his varied experience in the field of journalism dealt with the technical part of the workshop. The aspects covered by him include: feature and feature writing, news, story, articles and the characteristics: Human interest and utility, selection of subject etc. with a number of illustrations taken from the popular novels.

The best part of the Workshop was the response from the writers. Two days and two nights they worked hard and produced enough material which was so good that a cassette of 60 minutes containing the songs, poems, sketches etc. was planned and produced in the Suvantha Vani studios—a tremendous achievement which has become an instant success. Mr. K. Devadas and Mrs. Manjunath Joel were the producers and Mr. B. M. J. Dhyani scored the music. Mr. Kamalakara and Veena Kumari rendered the theme songs with their melodious voices.

Amidst great applause Rev. Dass Babu the Editor announced that SATYADOOTHA, the oldest magazine in Telugu Literature, would be revived. It was first published in 1842 by Bellary Missionaries which was later on taken by the C.L.S. in 1886. Owing to the financial constraints it was discontinued in 1970. The Writers Workshop was organised by the Communications Department in collaboration with the Christian Literature Society, Madras.

Assist Churches in their...—(Continued from page 9)

which we had never dared to dream of. I had been begging and begging her help and now suddenly support came from Kindernothilfe.

After returning from over thirty years of service in India, Kindernothilfe called me to Duisburg to help in the work. In 1967 I was chosen to become the successor of Superintendent Vetter. In those days already more than three thousand children were being taken care of Kindernothilfe, mostly from India. They were living in hostels which had been established through the initiative of a few well meaning individuals. When those responsible for the hostels (homes) requested support, also for new buildings, I explained to Kindernothilfe that it was not advisable to support private initiatives, except in cases of solid trust organisations. Questions arose about the property, to whom should it go? To whom should the property belong? Such legal questions had to be answered. I related this question to another point which was much more important to me: we can do Christian work in the long run only in partnership with the Church. Therefore, the Church must be responsible for this work. We must encourage the Church to take the initiative.

So it came about the [Kindernothilfe today works] together in close co-operation with the Church, not only with the Church of South India but with all Churches interested in this kind of work and capable of doing it. Very soon we had to draw up a new constitution which made it possible to integrate the hostels into the Churches. In this connection I formulated our task in co-operation with the Church: 'We assist the Churches in their mission to the young'.

Meanwhile the ministry is no longer limited to hostels. The care has been extended to handicapped children, orphans and to the poorest of the poor.

We may specially mention the beginning of the work in South America. There, most of the children and adolescents are taken care of by Day Care Centres and live with their families. We assist the Churches in their mission, to the young, therefore, we must share that we always share the full responsibility with the partner Churches. I can only hope and wish that in the future, by the grace of God, the blessings of this work may continue to flow in this world.

CSI CTVT Drinking Water Project

Ramnad District

It was 12 noon. About 100 men and women were digging the tank combating the heat and dust. Their life is full of struggles. Besides struggling for their livelihood, they even have to struggle for getting drinking water.

Digging borewells or deep wells do not help as only salt water is struck and this obviously cannot be used for drinking purposes. The only source of drinking water for the people of East Ramnad District is surface collection. This is possible only during the monsoon. What if the monsoon fails as it usually happens in this drought prone area? The people literally have to travel more than 10 kms to get a pot of drinking water! Employing bullock carts, cycles, buses and in extreme cases even walking, they must get the precious liquid for their very survival! Concepts, ideologies and philosophies do not work in this situation. But participatory planning and peoples' participation can do wonders.

Taking into consideration the miserable situation of the people, the CSI CTVT after continued discussions with the community and with technical assistance from AFPRO (Action for Food Production) helped in drawing up a workable plan for providing drinking water in East Ramnad District.

The Technology Mission (CAPART) of the Central Government when approached for funding by the CSI

CTVT immediately responded considering the intensity of the problem. The CSI CTVT has also offered its services to implement the programme by involving local people to dig eight 'ooranies' (surface water tanks) and seven filter points in various villages within two years.

The actual implementation of the programme started in June 1987. The first of the ooranies in Keelakedram village is nearing completion. So also in another two villages. Two filter points have also been completed. Work in the remaining places are in progress. More than 300 local people are employed on daily wage basis.

With the implementation of the programme, a new scenario is steadily emerging. Experience of misery and despair are slowly being replaced by hope and joy for the future.

I visited these places and saw for myself the work in progress. More important, the enthusiasm of the people and the change in stoic attitudes.

I commend the work that is being done by Mr. James E. Balraj, the Executive Director, Mr. R. Bhakther Solomon, the Assistant Director of CSI CTVT and the others at the field level and appreciate their concern and meaningful response to a desperate need.

REV. DASS BABU

Late Dr. Gift Siromoney (1932-1988)— A Tribute

MR. D. PACKIAMUTHU

Dr. Gift Siromoney has been the most gifted and versatile of our contemporaries. He was a scholar, musician, natural historian, artist and designer. His contribution to Tamil culture and language was remarkable and in the field of Indian History, he was absorbed in the study of epigraphy, temple architecture and bronzes. He was also a linguist.

Professor Dr. Gift Siromoney, head of the Department of Statistics, Madras Christian College Tambaram died on Monday the 21st March after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife Prof. Dr. Rani Siromoney, head of the Department of Mathematics, Madras Christian College and son Arul Siromoney.

Dr. Gift Siromoney hailed from the family of Abraham Pandithar of Tanjore and he was born in Tanjore in 1932. He had his college education in St. Joseph's College, Trichy and later in Madras Christian College, Tambaram. He received his Ph.D. from Madras University in 1964. He was an Ecumenical Fellow at the Union Theological Seminary, New York during 1958-'59. He also visited the United States of America as a Homi Bhabha Fellow in 1974.

Dr. Siromoney showed keen interest in the study of the origin and development of Tamil Script. To teach the common man the difficult art of deciphering the various forms of ancient Tamil scripts, he adapted a novel and effective method. He took the 1330 verses of Tirukural and wrote them in the different scripts that prevailed from the Ashokan era to the modern day. Starting from the known to the unknown he began the first chapter of Tirukural in the modern day script, and then proceeded in the successive chapters the scripts of the earlier periods thus making a smooth transition from period to period. And finally the last chapter was done in Tamil-Brahmi Script which is closely connected with the Brahmi script of Asoka.

He brought out this book under the title *Tirukural in Ancient Scripts*, and it was a costly production. I had the privilege of witnessing the production of this great book in the Diocesan Press, Madras. In order that the book should reach everyone, he fixed the selling price at the minimum cost price of Rs. 60 while a Book Publisher would have unhesitatingly fixed the price at Rs. 120. With the excellent get up and quality it looked like a foreign edition. Realising that even Rs. 60 was beyond the purchasing power of the common man he brought out immediately a cheap edition at a selling price of Rs. 9 only.

Dr. Siromoney with his colleagues (in the Department of Statistics) was able to find new inscriptions hitherto

unnoticed by epigraphists and had developed side-lighting photographic flash techniques to copy inscriptions and had applied computer methods of image enhancement and dating of inscriptions to Pallava and Chola inscriptions. His paper on 'Computer methods of dating medieval inscriptions' and on 'Indus Valley scripts' presented at the fifth international conference of Tamil studies and research held in Madurai in 1981 are notable contributions in the study of epigraphy. Dr. Siromoney has been a member of many professional societies including the Epigraphical Society of India and the Archaeological Society of South India.

He had co-authored a book entitled *Mahabalipuram studies* which is a veritable encyclopaedia on Mahabalipuram rock-cut temples, sculptures and images. Again he co-authored a book *Mathematics for Social sciences*. He had published many articles on computer mathematics, Statistics, natural history, epigraphy, art and archaeology. Dr. Siromoney always gave credit to his colleagues acknowledging their joint efforts by printing their names on the title page, if it were a book, and in by lines if it were a research paper. This benign quality is seldom found among scholars.

Dr. Siromoney was a gifted teacher of statistics and computer management. He had conducted extensive research work on Information Management and fed it through Newspapers periodically statistics on the fortunes and popularity of our political parties and their leaders in the country. His findings were accurate.

Only last year the Government of Tamilnadu selected both Dr. Gift Siromoney and Dr. Rani Siromoney and honoured them with best teacher awards. Probably that was the first time the Government chose the best teachers from among college teachers. Prof. Siromoney was a man of varied interests. He had a profound knowledge both in Indian and European music. He was also a student of natural history. He regularly watched the incoming and outgoing birds in Tambaram, and made a thorough study of the local history of Tambaram.

In the midst of his multifarious activities he was very much concerned about the illiteracy of the wanderer tribe Nari Kuravars, and with the help of his colleagues he worked out a Translation of Tirukural into the dialect Vaagriboli spoken by the Nari Kuravars. Vaagriboli has no script of its own, and Dr. Siromoney used Tamil scripts to write in Vaagriboli. He had also published a translation of the Gospel of St. Mark in Vaagriboli for the benefit of Nari Kuravars. Thus with great insight Dr. Siromoney continued the challenging work of the pioneering missionaries from the West.

St. Luke' Leprosarium, Peikulam

DR. G. M. JEYABALAN, *Peikulam*

'I walked and walked through the whole night, I walked, thought and suffered. You could never believe how lonely is aloneness. You have to move, live, breathe, see, hear in the midst of millions of people not daring to touch any of them, afraid to speak....'

Who are these lonely men and women living in dreadful isolation under the shadow? Very few great souls bothered to cheer up their dropping spirits; Jesus Christ, the Knights of St. Lazarus, St. Francis of Assisi, Father Damien, Mahatma Gandhi and Wellesly Baily, the Founder of the Leprosy Mission. These immortal souls opened the hidden souls of the millions of leprosy-afflicted men and women in leprosy colonies.

The St. Luke's Leprosarium is one such centre situated in a highly endemic area where the prevalence of leprosy is 3% of the population, which is one of the highest in the world. Founded by Late Dr. R. Vedabodakam, former Medical Superintendent of St. Luke's Hospital, Nazareth, it is run by the Tirunelveli Diocese of the Church of South India.

The T.D.T.A. St. Luke's Leprosarium is engaged in the control and eradication of leprosy from the endemic area of Peikulam. It also serves as referral centre for general practitioners and general hospitals who refer their problem leprosy cases for consultation and seriously ill-leprosy patients for hospitalization.

Free Service to the Poor

St. Luke's Leprosarium renders **FREE TREATMENT** to the sufferers of leprosy without any distinction of caste, or creed. Nearly one thousand are treated as out-patients and more than one hundred as in-patients, who, in addition to free treatment, receive free food too.

Expert treatment including the modern Multi Drug Therapy is given in this well equipped hospital by specially trained personnel.

In-patient Work

There are 96 beds in 3 wards—64 men in two wards and 32 women in one ward. Gone are the out-moded concept of Sanatoria where leprosy patients were admitted (imprisoned) for the rest of their life. Now the majority are treated as out-patients reporting at the out-patient clinic periodically, mostly once monthly. Only those suffering from serious complications, which warrant hospitalization are admitted. And they are kept as inpatients for a limited period—just for the duration of the treatment of complications and then discharged

quickly. Reconstructive Surgery is performed for the correction of claw-hands and drop-feet.

The hospital has a well-equipped operation theatre, clinical laboratory physiotherapy section and specially trained personnel. Thanks to the Central Agency, Bonn, West Germany, who helped build the two Men's Wards and also equipped them fully.

Home for the Healthy Children

The healthy children of leprosy-afflicted mothers are very often orphaned when a mother felled by leprosy is promptly deserted by her husband who marries another woman abandoning not only his leprosy-afflicted wife but also; his own healthy children born through her. These unfortunate kids most often tend to become beggars as well as 'lepers'. St. Luke's Leprosarium's Home for the orphan children has given refuge to 50 such children all of whom are healthy and are attending the school in the neighbouring village.

Thanks to the World Missionary Evangelism, Texas, U.S.A for adopting 30 children.

Health Education

Leprosy is still shrouded in mystery and superstition. Many do not know that leprosy can be cured. Visiting villages and schools with films and audiovisual aids, the St. Luke's Leprosarium's Health Education Team preaches the good news that leprosy is curable and teaches the early symptoms and signs of leprosy.

Rehabilitation of Ex-Leprosy Subjects

This is another important aspect of St. Luke's Leprosarium's services. Even after cure, the ill-informed and misinformed society continues to ostracize the ex-leprosy subjects denying them employment opportunities. These unfortunate victims have only one option—begging, a tragedy as bad as the disease itself. Therefore St. Luke's Leprosarium extends its services even beyond the hospital. The rejected are employed in the Rehabilitation Centre Agriculture Farm attached to the Leprosarium.

An Out-Patient Block

The Leprosarium does not have a separate building for the out-patient clinic. At present the veranda portion of the men's ward with some make-shift alteration is being used for the purpose. A separate building for this has been a long-felt need.

... are eager that the Leprosarium should commemorate the memory of Dr. R. Vedabodakam who founded the Leprosarium in 1956. It is proposed to name the out-patient building after Dr. R. Vedabodakam.

A Building For the Home for Healthy Children

The orphaned Healthy Children of leprosy-afflicted beggars are at present residing in a ramshackle old building which was originally the in-patient's kitchen. These poor kids are simply rolling on the floor which is limited in space. A building for these healthy children is our second biggest need.

Audio-Visual Aids for Health Education in the Villages

The 16 mm projector which we have been using in our health education work has irretrievably broken down having rendered one quatrter century (!) of service. A

new 16 mm projector, Video Cassette player with a big screen T.V., and a van will strengthen our hands to carry the gospel of the curability of leprosy and its scientific facts to every nook and corner of this endemic area.

The institution depends heavily on donations and gifts from philanthropic individuals and organizations especially for feeding in-patients. Here is a scheme for assisting St. Luke's Leprosarium in its battle against leprosy.

Our thanks are due to

- (a) The Leprosy Mission, London the single largest supporter.
- (b) The World Missionary Evangelism, Texas, U.S.A. for its generous aid to the orphan children, and leprosy-inpatients.
- (c) Lepra for aiding the treatment of leprosy-afflicted children.

COURSE IN HEALTH AND HEALING AT CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP HOSPITAL, ODDANCHATRAM

Anna Dist. Tamilnadu, South India

From 7 to 31 August, 1988

For Pastors, Hospital Chaplains, Men and Women Interested in the Healing Ministry of the Church.

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CHAPLAIN
Christian Medical Association of India
Smruti Theatre Compound,
Mount Road Extension,
P. Box No. 24, Nagpur-440 001

The course seeks to impart the wider Christian understanding of healing, health and wholeness. It is designed to help the participants develop sensitivity to the people who are sick and suffering and to acquire skills in counselling and ministering to the people in need. Distinguished Christians in medicine, theology and pastoral-care will lead the various sessions. Role plays, hospital visitation, reading assignments and group interactions will be used to achieve the goals.

The course is subsidized by Christian Medical Association of India and is open to people from all denominations. Only twenty-five seats are available. Participants must be sponsored by local churches or church related health institutions.

Christian Fellowship Hospital, Oddanchatram, is between Palani and Dindigul and is easily reached by road from Coimbatore, Madurai and Dindigul. The course will be conducted in English and a working knowledge of English is essential for all who attend.

For further information write to : **CHAPLAIN**

Christian Medical Association of India
P.B. NO. 24, NAGPUR-440 001.

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF CSI CHURCH, HANAMKONDA 1962-1987

The Silver Jubilee celebration of CSI Church, Hanamkonda in Karimnagar Diocese, took place on the 12th and the 13th of March 1988.

The celebrations were inaugurated on 12th March by the Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas the present bishop of the Diocese. At 6 P.M. a felicitation function was arranged to honour the Bishops and the presbyters who worked at Hanamkonda. The congregation was honoured by the presence of the newly elected Moderator, The Most Rev. Dr. P. Victor Premasagar on the occasion. The thanksgiving service was held on the 13th morning which was well attended.

To suit the occasion a souvenir was brought out by the church. It contains the messages and greetings of the Moderator the Bishops, and the presbyters concerned. It also contained a brief history of the church that was started in 1962 when Hanamkonda was in the erstwhile Diocese of Dornakal. The first presbyter was Rev. K. E. Swamidas (the present Bishop of Karimnagar) The Rt. Rev. P. Solomon pioneered to establish the church along with the late Dr. M. S. Raju, the late Mr. V. George. The church in particular is greatly indebted to The Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas who laboured sincerely for its establishment. The

church building was constructed during 1973 and 1979 and was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. B. Prabhudas the Bishop in Karimnagar during that period. The church has grown in strength during the past twenty years by the grace of God. The whole congregation was jubilant on the occasion that, in praise and thanks to the Lord Jesus, the members gave their offerings liberally.

Revival meetings were arranged on these two days. Rev. Dass Babu was the special speaker who gave inspiring messages.

The church has resolved to take up the following projects to mark the occasion.

- (1) Construction of guestroom-cum-library
- (2) Support church workers
- (3) Conduct Gospel campaigns.

The presence of friends and well wishers from far and near added colour to the occasion. The function was a great success as Five Bishops, including The Rt. Rev. P. Solomon graced the occasion.

REV. B. JOSEPH
Presbyter

KARIMNAGAR DIOCESE

Visit to Parkal Mission Area

February 19th to 22nd 1988 were memorable days in the minds of the people of Parkal Mission area. Mrs. and Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas Bishop in Karimnagar and Mrs. & Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani Bishop in Madhya Kerala Diocese visited this area during these days and participated in many functions in different villages.

On 19th February a felicitation meeting was arranged in the CSI Mission High School Parkal at 9.00 a.m., on the eve of the first visit of the Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas to this school. Bishop K. E. Swamidas, Bishop M. C. Mani and Mrs. Mani and other guests were received with lazeems dance of the children at the entrance. The scouts and guides gave guard of honour to the guests. The meeting began with prayer by Rev. B. Sadanandam, Diocesan Secretary, Karimnagar. After garlanding the Bishop by the representatives, felicitation address in Telugu was read and presented to the Bishop by Sri N. Laxmaiah, Telugu Pandit and the English version was read by the headmaster and it was presented to the Bishop by the Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani, Bishop in Madhya Kerala Diocese.

While welcoming the Bishops and other guests, the headmaster Sri K. J. Thomas gave a brief report of the

development of the school from a Primary school to the present stage of fulfilled high school with large strength and good academic progress and requested the Bishops and other Diocesan Officers for their support to upgrade the present school to a Junior college in the very near future.

The Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani Bishop in Madhya Kerala offered felicitations to the new Bishop Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas and expressed that any effort by the Karimnagar Diocese in developing the Parkal school will be happily responded. The Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas in his message thanked the staff and the students for the love and affection. Sri G. A. Prasada Rao, Diocesan Treasurer was also present. Rev. Shajan A. Idiculla proposed vote of thanks.

At 10.30 a.m. on that day the Parkal Mission annual committee was held in the CSI St. Paul's Church Parkal under the chairmanship of the Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas Bishop in Karimnagar. Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani Bishop in Madhya Kerala and his wife; Sri G. A. Prasada Rao Diocesan Treasurer, Rev. B. Sadanandam Diocesan Secretary, Rev. B. J. Manikya Rao GCC Chairman, delegates and other members took part in the delibera-

things in the committee which reviewed the reports no different activities in the Mission field. Among other things, the committee considered setting up of Rural Medical Centre, opening of paid hostel for boys at Parkal, possibilities of getting theologically trained evangelists for the Mission work, after reviewing the detailed proposals in the next committee in June 1988. In the beginning of the meeting the members observed two minutes silence in memory of the Late Rev. T. M. Thomas, Pioneer Missionary to Parkal Mission who slept in the Lord on 25th April 1987.

In the evening the Bishops participated in a prayer meeting at Dharmaram village where the Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani laid the foundation stone for the proposed new church. The villagers participated in it with much enthusiasm. Later, all the Missionaries and workers had a time of prayer and fellowship at 8.30 p.m. in a meeting at Parkal church.

On 20th February the Bishops proceeded to Anthukthanda congregation where the foundation stone for the proposed new church was laid by the Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani. The Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas conducted the service and spoke on the occasion. This village congregation is being supported by the Professional Fellowship in Madhya Kerala Diocese. It is a remote small village in the tribal area which is 30 kilometres away from Parkal in Mogullappalli area. Most of the christians here are originally from Jammikunta Pastorate, but are settled in Anthukthanda for the last many years. They were longing for worshipping together in this forest area. They contacted the Missionary and requested for an evangelist. Now they worship together regularly and the evangelist Sri N. Anandam has been taking care of them.

After lunch at Mogullappalli the Bishops and Missionaries proceeded to Thekmatla, a village where the newly constructed house for the evangelist was dedicated by the Bishop M. C. Mani and declared opened by the Bishop K. E. Swamidas. A small prayer meeting was arranged in front of the house in which the Bishops expressed happiness over the great enthusiasm of the village Christians there and called upon for continued fellowship and worshipping regularly. Rev. Thomas K. Oommen, welcomed the guests and Sri G. Kiran Kumar, Teacher and son of Rev. G. Isaiah of Dornakal proposed vote of thanks. It was well appreciated that the house construction was completed within a short period of 11 months. Though some more finishing work is to be completed the village congregation is thankful to the sponsoring church Mundiappalli (M.K. Diocese) for its effort in helping this congregation and for constructing the worker's house at Thekumatla.

A small prayer meeting was arranged at Chitral Centre at 8.00 p.m. on the same evening. The Bishops were received at the Centre with singing and dancing. Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani thanked the congregation members and conveyed greetings on behalf of the Madhya Kerala Diocese. Sri P. Ananda Rao, Evangelist, welcomed the gathering.

On Sunday, the 21st February Bishop M. C. Mani celebrated Holy communion and preached at St. Thomas Church, Mogullappalli. Mrs. M. C. Mani gave message in the Women's Fellowship meeting arranged soon after the worship service. Bishop K. E. Swamidas celebrated Holy communion and preached at Gandhinagar congregation. Sr. Mary Thomas welcomed the Bishop and the other guests.

The culmination of these three days' programme was the inauguration of the newly formed Nadikuda Pastorate at 6.00 p.m. on 21st February 1988. Mrs. & Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas, Mrs. & Rt. Rev. M. C. Mani, the Diocesan Secretary, and other guests were received at the Nadikuda junction and all went in a procession, singing Bhajans and dancing to the CSI Church, the venue of the inaugural function. It was a time of renewed fellowship and rejoicing. Members from all congregations in the new pastorate attended the programme. The Rev. B. Sadanandam Diocesan Secretary read out the relevant and approved resolution of the Diocesan Executive committee recognising the new pastorate and the Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas declared the new NADIKUDA PASTORATE as duly formed. Bishop M. C. Mani in his message expressed happiness over the development of pastorates which leads to further extension of evangelistic work and he stressed the need for shouldering responsibilities in the united effort of evangelistic work in the nearby villages. The Rt. Rev. K. E. Swamidas called upon the members for further strengthening of the congregation in Christian nurture to pave the way for self supporting without depending for external help always. Rev. B. Joseph also spoke on behalf of the Warangal Group Church Council. Rev. Shajan A. Idiculla, Missionary in-Charge welcomed the gathering and Sri B. Y. Paul proposed vote of thanks.

Mrs. and Bishop K. E. Swamidas left for Karimnagar on the same night and Mrs. & Bishop M. C. Mani left for Kerala the next day. The visit and participation in different functions in the Mission area by the Bishop were much encouraging to the people, workers and Missionaries in the Parkal and Andhra Mission (Mogullappalli) area.

—K. J. THOMAS
Correspondent

Early morning of the 19th of March, 1988, saw groups of women from all over the Diocese of Madurai-Ramnad streaming towards the Webb Memorial Church, Madurai to participate in the Celebration of Annunciation Day and Diocesan Women's Conference. This large group of 500 women sat spell bound as our Bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. D. G. Pothirajulu celebrated Holy Communion and in his sermon he illustrated from the parable of the Ten Virgins that our secular and religious life should go hand in hand as the lamp and the all together give out light.

Mrs. Pothirajulu, our Bishop Amma, in her keynote address, stressed the point that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was very practical and her song of praise was revolutionary in its religious and socio-economic aspects. Professor D. Chellappa of the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary compared the woman who was bound for many years to all women who are bound by social evils. He also reminded that the woman of Samaria was the first woman to recognize and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.

Mrs. Jessie Anand Asir, Secretary of the Women's Fellowship of the Tirunelveli Diocese spoke about the 40 year period of peace during the days of Deborah, the Lady Judge.

Mrs. Leela Rajanandham who came from the Diocese of Vellore explained with charts the work done by thier Women's Fellowship which was quite encouraging.

The Ecumenical Decade

Our Bishop Amma explained clearly what the Ecumenical Decade meant, that women should come forward to eradicate social evils. Pleading for the adequate represen-

tation of women, she demanded that women should be given at least 40% seats in church committees and encouraged women to know the Constitution of the church of South India.

The announcements regarding the Ecumenical Decade : 'Churches in Solidarity with Women' were made in several churches in Madurai. Our Bishop Amma herself spoke in detail about the Decade, 1988 in two churches on 10-4-1988.

Women against women ?

Yes, women do sometimes work against women, said Mrs. Christudoss of CASA, Madras. When we accept dowry and give dowry, we are working against the uplift of women. Mr. Jebasingh Simeon of CASA also with us, giving us formats for discussion and stressing on follow-up work. Mrs. Porkodi, Junior Lecturer of the Law College, Madurai, highlighted the religious laws concerning women. Mrs. S. Packianathan, Principal, School of Nursing, Madurai, stressed the health aspect of women—common ailments of women—prevention and treatment. A role-play, 'The Church as a Living Community' was enacted by the delegates.

Conclusion

The conference succeeded in creating awareness of the position and role of women in today's society and led the participants to think about the society which God wants.

MRS. VASANTHA VICTOR
Correspondent

BISHOP EASOW MAR TIMOTHEOS

A Tribute by

BISHOP SUNDAR CLARKE

It is with great sorrow that we have come to learn of the passing beyond of Bishop Easow Mar Timotheos. To me it is a personal loss and I feel I have lost one of my closest spiritual friends. We were very much together in the Spiritual Renewal ministry and I found him an inspiration and an asset in this ministry. He had a deep concern for the Church and its spirituality. I have lost one of my closest spiritual brothers and the Church has lost one of its great sons of God.

Easow the simple Bishop :

We have been together in many conferences and we have worked together for nearly a decade for the spiritual renewal movement and I always observed his simplicity. It could be attributed to the Ashram life style in which he started his career. He was a true monk of today's world. He was a spiritual ascetic who never wanted or cared for money, wealth or pleasure. He was a man of deep faith in God and his simplicity was very evident and infectious.

Easow the Spiritual Bishop:

He was ahead of many people in his spirituality. He was a man who spent long hours in prayer and his spirituality was reflected in his life and in his teachings. His leadership in the spiritual renewal movement rather unfortunately was not understood by many. The greatest evidence of his spirituality was his humility.

He was never ashamed to kneel in public and pray for others and to be prayed for by others. His humility found expression in his day to day life and living. He would often decline offices and chairs and prefer to be one with God's people. I always enjoyed his preaching. His preaching was a reflection of his spirituality. It could be said that his life was his best sermon. He was never ashamed to acknowledge the need to be prayed for publicly and for others to put their hands on him and pray for him. A rare quality in episcopacy.

Easow the Saintly Bishop :

Very often like Stephen one saw that he was 'full of the Holy Spirit'. Sitting and listening to him we often saw his face radiate the glory of God. I would consider him, without any hesitation as one who passed beyond to be numbered the saints of God. The church has lost one of its present days saints and Easow was and is a rare spiritual find.

While we mourn his loss we rejoice in hope. While he is not in human communication, he is in divine communion with us, while he has gone beyond, his spirit of prayer, simplicity, humility, godliness and saintliness still hovers over the Church of God. Easow was always ready for the Nunc Dimittis and has gone to be with the Lord he loved. 'We praise thee God—Te Deum'.

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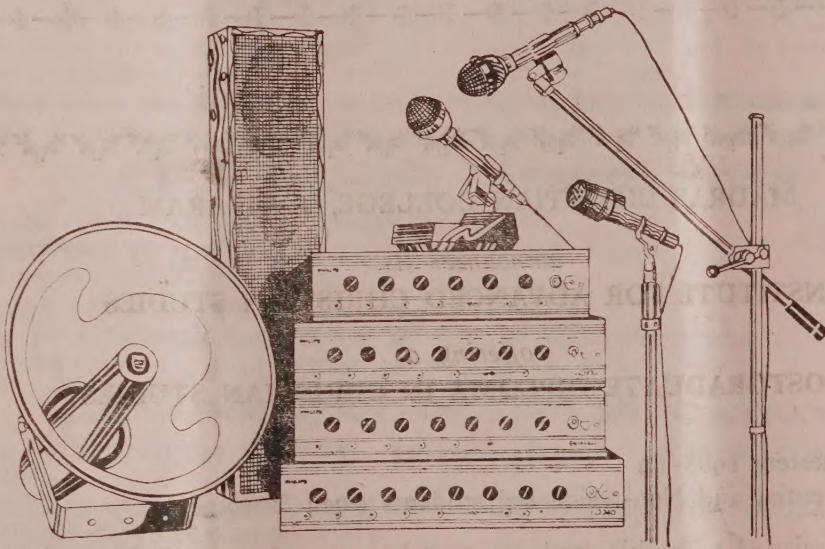


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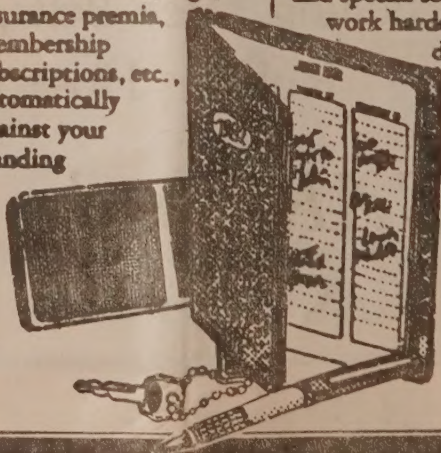
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